

NONPROVISIONAL PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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Attorney Docket No.: 102624

Date: January 21, 1999

BOX PATENT APPLICATION

**NONPROVISIONAL APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL
RULE §1.53(b)**

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
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Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing under 37 C.F.R. §1.53(b) is the nonprovisional patent application

For (Title): FACSIMILE SYSTEM

By (Inventors): Shuji OTSUKA (Shiomi-cho, JAPAN) and Satoshi MATSUSITA (Hiromi-cho, JAPAN)

- ☒ Formal drawings (Figs. 1-13; 12 sheets) are attached.
☐ A Declaration and Power of Attorney is filed herewith.
☐ An assignment of the invention to _____ is filed herewith.
☐ An Information Disclosure Statement is filed herewith.
☐ A statement to establish small entity status under 37 C.F.R. §§1.9 and 1.27 is filed herewith.
☐ A Preliminary Amendment is filed herewith.
☐ Please amend the specification by inserting before the first line of the sentence --This nonprovisional application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. _____, filed ____--
☒ Priority of foreign application Nos. 10-23840 filed January 21, 1998 in Japan and 10-38115 filed February 4, 1998 in Japan is claimed (35 U.S.C. §119).
☐ A certified copy of the above corresponding foreign application(s) is filed herewith.
☒ The filing fee is calculated below:

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ANY PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT NOTED ABOVE**

FOR:	NO. FILED	NO. EXTRA
BASIC FEE		
TOTAL CLAIMS	20 - 20	= 0
INDEP CLAIMS	5 - 3	= 2
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIMS PRESENTED		

* If the difference is less than zero, enter "0".

SMALL ENTITY

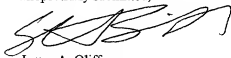
RATE	FEE
	\$ 380
x 9 =	\$
x 39 =	\$
+130 =	\$
TOTAL	\$

**OTHER THAN A
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RATE	FEE
	\$ 760
x 18 =	\$
x 78 =	\$ 156
+260 =	\$
TOTAL	\$ 916

- ☒ Check No. 65778 in the amount of \$216.00 to cover the filing fee is attached. Except as otherwise noted herein, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any other fees that may be required to complete this filing, or to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 15-0461. Two duplicate copies of this sheet are attached.
☐ This application is entitled to small entity status. DO NOT charge large entity fees to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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107, 273

FACSIMILE SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the invention

5 This invention relates to a facsimile system including a facsimile machine and a computer for controlling names of addressees, facsimile numbers, etc.

2. Description of the related art

10 In conventional facsimile machines, data of names of addressees to whom image data read from an original or manuscript and corresponding facsimile numbers as selected registration numbers (such as abbreviated numbers) is stored in a memory. When a registration number of an addressee is input upon transmission of image data of the original, the name of address
15 and the facsimile number both corresponding to the input registration number are read and displayed on a liquid-crystal display section. When a user confirms the displayed contents and then depresses a transmission button, the original is read and the image data read from the original is transmitted to the
20 displayed addressee.

25 In the above-described facsimile machines, however, keys and abbreviated dialing buttons depressed for input of a facsimile number also serve as character keys. Further, every one key is allotted to a plurality of characters so that characters can be input by use of a small number of keys. Moreover, the individual keys are small and the liquid-crystal display section displaying the input characters also has a small display area. The above-mentioned keys etc. need to be operated

so that the characters are input when the names of addresses are registered. This registering work takes much time as compared with the case where a keyboard equipped in a computer or word processor is operated.

- 5 To solve the above-described problem, the prior art has proposed an arrangement in which a computer is connected to a facsimile machine. In this arrangement, data of information about the addressee such as the names of addressees and corresponding facsimile numbers is input into the computer.
- 10 Thereafter, the data of information about the addressees is transferred to the facsimile machine and stored in a suitable memory. In the proposed arrangement, however, in the case where the user makes reference to the data of information about the addressee when the original is to be transmitted by the facsimile
- 15 machine, the user needs to move from a location where the facsimile machine is equipped to a location where the computer is equipped, so that the user operates the computer in order that the data of information about the addressee may be displayed. Thus, the user cannot make reference to the data of information
- 20 about the addressees at the facsimile machine side. This results in a troublesome operation.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

- Therefore, an object of the present invention is to provide a facsimile system in which the data of information about the
- 25 addressees stored at the computer side can be referred to at the facsimile machine side.

The present invention provides a facsimile system comprising a facsimile machine reading image data from an

original, a computer transmitting to and receiving from the facsimile machine data of addressee identification information indicative of at least a name of addressee and a facsimile number corresponding to the name of addressee, computer-side storage
5 means provided at a computer side for storing the data of addressee identification information, computer-side referring means provided at the computer side for referring to the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means, and instruction means provided in
10 the facsimile machine so as to be instructed at a facsimile machine side to refer via the computer-side referring means to the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means.

According to the above-described facsimile system, the
15 computer-side referring means refers to the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means when the instruction means gives the computer an instruction to refer to the data of addressee identification information. As a result, the facsimile machine can refer to
20 the data of addressee identification information. Accordingly, when data of addressee identification information which cannot be stored at the facsimile machine side is stored in the computer-side storage means, the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage
25 means can freely be referred to by the instruction means at the facsimile machine side. Consequently, a quantity of substantially storable data of addressee identification information can be increased to a large degree.

In a preferred form, the computer includes computer-side output means for outputting the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means. Further, the facsimile machine includes facsimile-side input means
5 provided so that the data of addressee identification information output by the computer-side output means is received in the facsimile machine and facsimile-side storage means for storing the data of addressee identification information supplied to the facsimile-side input means.

10 In another preferred form, the facsimile machine includes facsimile-side registering means for registering the data of addressee identification information in the facsimile-side storage means and facsimile-side output means for outputting the data of addressee identification information registered in the
15 facsimile-side storage means by the facsimile-side registering means. In this preferred form, the computer includes computer-side input means for receiving the data of addressee identification information output from the facsimile-side storage means by the facsimile-side output means, and the
20 computer-side storage means stores the data of addressee identification information received by the computer-side input means.

In further another preferred form, the facsimile machine is capable of executing facsimile transmission via an internet
25 to an addressee, and the facsimile machine includes reading means for reading data of address information registered on the basis of an electronic mail application program which is already in operation and designating means for designating the data of

address information read by the reading means as data of address information for the facsimile transmission via the internet. In this arrangement, the facsimile machine preferably includes address information storage means for storing the data of address information designated by the designating means as an addressee address for the facsimile transmission via the internet and address selecting means for selecting a desired address from the address information storage means.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

10 Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become clear upon reviewing the following description of the preferred embodiments made with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a communication line to which
15 a facsimile system of one embodiment in accordance with the present invention is connected;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a personal computer and a facsimile machine both constituting the facsimile system;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the facsimile machine;

20 FIG. 4 is a block diagram showing an electrical arrangement of the personal computer shown in FIG. 2;

FIG. 5 is a block diagram showing an electrical arrangement of the facsimile machine shown in FIG. 2;

FIG. 6 illustrates the contents of a telephone directory
25 28c;

FIGS. 7A and 7B are flowcharts showing the contents of main processes carried out by a CPUs 30 and 25 respectively;

FIGS. 8A and 8B are flowcharts showing the contents of a

registering process the CPU 30 carries out at step 100 in FIG. 7A and the contents of a synchronous registering process the CPU 25 carries out at step 200 in FIG. 7A respectively;

FIGS. 9A and 9B are flowcharts showing the contents of a retrieval requiring process the CPU 30 carries out at step 120 in FIG. 7A and a retrieving process the CPU 25 carries out at step 220 in FIG. 7B respectively;

FIG. 10 is a flowchart showing the contents of a transmission process the CPU 30 carries out at step 140 in FIG. 7A;

FIG. 11 is a block diagram of an internet facsimile machine of another embodiment in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 12 is a schematic block diagram of a communication network to which the internet facsimile machine is connected; and

FIG. 13 is a flowchart showing processes for diverting, to the use with an internet facsimile application, address information registered by an electronic mail application which is stalled in a personal computer and is already in operation.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

One embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to FIGS. 1 to 10. Referring to FIG. 1, a communication line to which a facsimile system 1 in accordance with the present invention is connected is shown. The facsimile system 1 comprises a facsimile machine 3 and a personal computer 2 (hereinafter, "PC") 2 connected to the facsimile machine 3 by a connecting cable 4. The facsimile machine 3 is connected to a telephone exchanger 6 by a telephone line 5. The telephone exchanger 6 is connected via a post office protocol server (POPS)

11 and a simple mail transfer protocol server (SMTP) 7 to an internet A. The internet A is connected to an SMTP 8 further connected via a POPS 12 and a telephone exchanger 9 to a facsimile machine 10 owned by an addressee. The telephone exchangers 6 and 9 are connected via a public communication exchange network B to each other. The facsimile machine 10 of the addressee has functions of transmitting and receiving data via the internet A or the public communication exchange network B.

An arrangement of the PC 2 will be described with reference to FIG. 2. The PC 2 comprises a computer body 21 incorporated with a CPU, a keyboard 22, a mouse 23, and a CRT monitor 24. The facsimile machine 3 is connected via the connecting cable 4 to the computer body 21. The keyboard 22 is used to input data of addressee identification information such as a name, a facsimile number or a mail address of an addressee. The computer body 21 is provided with an FD drive 26 for driving a 3.5-inch floppy disk (hereinafter, "FD") and a CD-ROM drive 27 for driving a CD-ROM. The FD drive 26 or the CD-ROM drive 27 is used to install an application program for controlling the data of addressee identification information. The CRT monitor 24 constitutes computer-side display means in the invention.

An electrical arrangement of the PC 2 will now be described with reference to FIG. 4. The computer body 21 includes a CPU 25 carrying out programs of an operating system and an application program for controlling a telephone directory (data file) in which data of addressee identification information including names, facsimile numbers and mail addresses of addressees to whom image data is transmitted from the facsimile machine 3. A ROM

21a, a RAM 21b, a hard disk drive (hereinafter, "HDD") 28 are connected to the CPU 25. An interface (IF) 29 is also connected to the CPU 25 for receiving via the connecting cable 4 various commands transmitted from the facsimile machine 3. An operating system 28a, various application programs 28b and a telephone directory 28c are stored in the HDD 28.

The telephone directory 28c will be described with reference to FIG. 6. For example, the telephone directory 28c is designed to be able to register one hundred sets of telephone directory data (Nos. 1 to 100). In each set, data of the name of an addressee, the corresponding facsimile number and mail address is registered. The HDD 28 constitutes computer-side storage means in the invention.

The facsimile machine 3 will be described with reference to FIG. 3. The facsimile machine 3 is of a multi-function type provided with a plurality of functions of facsimile, image scanning, printing and copying. A facsimile machine with only the facsimile function or with the facsimile function and one or more of the above-mentioned functions may be used, instead.

The facsimile machine 3 comprises a generally box-shaped housing 3j. An operation panel 3a is provided on a forward portion of the top of the housing 3j. The operation panel 3a comprises numeric keys 3b of "0" to "9" for input of a facsimile number of an addressee, a start button 3c for instruction to start reading an original etc., a stop button 3d for instruction to interrupt transmission of image data, abbreviated dialing buttons 3e for transmission of image data by use of an abbreviated facsimile number, a retrieval button 3f operated so that the CPU

25 of the PC 2 carries out retrieval of the telephone directory
28c stored in the HDD 28, and a registration button 3g operated
for determining registration of addressee information input with
the numeric keys 3b. The numeric keys 3b are adapted for entry
5 of characters and symbols and accordingly, can be used for input
of the name of addressee and mail address of an electronic mail.

A liquid-crystal display (LCD) 3h is provided in the rear
of the operation panel 3g on the top of the housing 3j. The LCD
3h displays the name, facsimile number and mail address of an
10 addressee, and an operating state of the facsimile machine 3.
An original setting section 3i is provided in the rear of the
LCD 3h for setting an original or manuscript carrying information
to be transmitted or copied. The original set in the original
setting section 3i is carried into the housing 3j by a paper
15 feeding mechanism (not shown) provided in the housing 3j. An
image scanner (shown by reference numeral 38 in FIG. 5) is
provided for reading image information on the carried original.
The original whose image information has been read by the image
scanner is discharged onto a tray 3m through an original outlet
20 3k provided below the operation panel 3a, being stacked.

A recording paper setting section 3n is provided in the
original setting section 3m. Sheets of recording paper for
recording received image information or print data are set in
the recording paper setting section 3n. A recording paper
25 cassette (not shown) accommodating a plurality of sheets of
recording paper in a stacked state is detachably attached to the
recording paper setting section 3n. The recording paper
accommodated in the cassette is carried into the housing 3j by

the above-mentioned paper feeding mechanism. The image information or print data is recorded on the carried recording paper by a printer (shown by reference numeral 49 in FIG. 5). The recording paper on which the image information or print data
5 has been recorded is discharged through a recording paper outlet 3p provided below the tray 3.

A video signal input terminal 3q is provided on a lower right-hand portion of a front of the housing 3a as viewed in FIG. 3. A video camera (not shown) connected to the terminal 3q
10 delivers video signals to the facsimile machine 3, so that image information is printed by the printer on the basis of the video signals. A communication terminal (not shown) connected to a telephone line 5 and a terminal (not shown) connected to the connecting cable 4 for connection to the PC 2 are provided on
15 a rear of the housing 3a. A telephone receiver (not shown) is provided on a left-hand side of the housing 3 for the purpose of contact with an addressee. The retrieval button 3f constitutes instruction means and the LCD 3h constitutes facsimile-side display means in the invention.

20 An electrical arrangement of the facsimile machine 3 will now be described with reference to FIG. 5. The facsimile machine 3 is provided with a facsimile unit FU and a printer unit PU. Both units are connected via an interface 42 to each other. The facsimile unit FU includes a CPU 30 for controlling the image
25 scanner 38, transmission and receiving of image information, and input and output of various commands and addressee information from and to the PC 2. The CPU 30 is connected to a facsimile control circuit 41. The ROM 31, the RAM 32 and the EEPROM 33

are connected to the facsimile control circuit 41. The ROM 31 stores a control program 31a on the basis of which the CPU 30 executes the above-mentioned controls. The RAM 32 temporarily stores image information read from the original by the image scanner 38. The EEPROM 33 erasably stores a telephone directory having the same arrangement as the telephone directory 28c stored in the HDD 28 of the PC 2. The abbreviated dialing buttons 3e correspond to registration numbers 1 to 12 respectively. Each of the registration numbers is accessible from the EEPROM 33 by operation of the corresponding abbreviated dialing button 3e. Regarding the other registration numbers, the numeric keys 3b are operated so that the desired registration number is accessible from the EEPROM 33 when the registration number is directly input.

Further, a PC interface 39, an NCU 34, a modem 35 and an original sensor 40 for detecting the setting of an original are connected to the facsimile control circuit 41. An encoder 36 and a decoder 37 are further connected to the facsimile control circuit 41. The encoder 36 encodes data of image information obtained by the image scanner 38 scanning an original to compressed data. The decoder 37 decodes encoded data of received image information.

On the other hand, the printer unit PU is provided with a printer control circuit 43 for controlling a printer 49. A CPU 44 executing a program for controlling the printer 49 is connected to the printer control circuit 43. A ROM 45, a RAM 46, a PC interface 47, a character generator (CG) 48 and the printer 49 are further connected to the printer control circuit 43. The

ROM 45 stores the program executed by the CPU 44 and the like. The RAM 46 includes a work memory used when the CPU 44 executes the program and a print memory storing print data etc. The PC 2 is connected to the PC interface 47. The character generator 48 stores data of vector font of printing characters.

In the embodiment, the PC interface 39 is a parallel interface in conformity to the Centronics Standards. The facsimile machine 3 transmits and receives data to and from the PC 2 via the cable 4 connected to the PC interface 39. The EEPROM 33 constitutes facsimile-side storage means in the invention.

The control contents of the CPUs 30 and 25 will be described with reference to FIGS. 7A to 10. These control contents start with a process for referring to the telephone directory stored in the HDD 28 of the PC 2 and ends with a process for transmitting an electronic mail from the facsimile machine 3. First, FIGS. 7A and 7B show the contents of main processes executed by each CPU. The CPU 30 of the facsimile machine 3 carries out a registering process (step 100), a retrieval requiring process (step 120) and a transmission process (step 140) in this sequence as shown in FIG. 7A. In the registering process, addressee information is registered in the telephone directory stored in the EEPROM 33. The CPU 30 requires the PC 2 to retrieve the addressee identification information in the retrieval requiring process. In the transmission process, data of image information the image scanner 38 has scanned from the original is transmitted, accompanied with an electronic mail. Alternatively, the data is transmitted via a public telephone line to a facsimile machine of the addressee.

The CPU 25 of the PC 2 carries out a synchronous registering process (step 200) and a retrieving process (step 220) sequentially as shown in FIG. 7B. In the synchronous registering process, the CPU 25 registers the telephone directory having the
5 same contents as the telephone directory stored in the facsimile machine 3 in synchronization with build-up of power supply to the facsimile machine 3 and registration of addressee identification information. In the retrieving process, the CPU 25 retrieves the data of addressee identification information
10 in response to the retrieval requirement from the CPU 30 of the facsimile machine 3.

The registering process the CPU 30 executes at step 100 and the synchronous registering process the CPU 25 executes at step 200 will now be described in detail with reference to FIGS. 8A
15 and 8B. First, the CPU 30 detects power-on of the facsimile machine 3 (YES at step 102) and then reads the data of telephone directory stored in the EEPROM 33 (step 104). The CPU 30 delivers the read data of telephone directory via the PC interface 39 to the PC 2 (step 106).

20 On the other hand, the CPU 25 of the PC 2 inputs the output data of telephone directory (step 202), registering the input data in the telephone directory 28c of the HDD 28 thereof (step 204). In this case, a previous data of the telephone directory 28c of the HDD 28 is renewed by a new one.

25 The CPU 30 then judges whether the facsimile machine 3 is in a mode for registration of the data of addressee identification information (step 108). When the facsimile machine 3 is in the mode (YES at step 108), the CPU 30 inputs the data of addressee

identification information the user has supplied by operation of the numeric keys 3b (step 110). Upon detection of the ON state of the registration button 3g for determining registration of the input data of addressee identification information (YES at step 112), the CPU 30 registers in the EEPROM 33 the data of addressee identification information input at step 110 (step 114). The CPU 30 then delivers the same data of addressee identification information as the registered one to the PC 2 (step 116). The CPU 25 of the PC 2 inputs and registers the output data of the addressee identification information in the telephone directory 28c of the HDD 28 (steps 206 and 208). The renewed contents of the telephone directory are displayed on the CRT monitor 24 (step 210).

In the above-described facsimile system 1, the telephone directory having the same contents as that stored in the facsimile machine 3 is automatically stored in the PC 2. The user can view the telephone directory having the same contents when operating either the facsimile machine 3 or the PC 2. This is convenient for the user.

The retrieval requiring process the CPU 30 executes at step 120 and the retrieving process the CPU 25 executes at step 220 will now be described in detail with reference to FIG. 9. First, the CPU 30 detects input of retrieved characters, namely, the initials of the addressee or characters indicative of part of the name of addressee with the numeric keys 3b (YES at step 122). Upon detection of the ON state of the retrieving button 3f (YES at step 124), the CPU 30 delivers to the PC 2 a retrieval requiring command (retrieving command) indicative of requirement of

retrieval of the addressee identification information containing the retrieved characters (step 126).

On the other hand, when detecting input of the retrieval requiring command (YES at step 222), the CPU 25 of the PC 2
5 retrieves the data of addressee identification information containing the retrieved characters indicated by the retrieval requiring command in the telephone directory 28c of the HDD 28 thereof, extracting the data (step 224). The CPU 25 then delivers the results of extraction to the facsimile machine 3
10 (step 226).

The CPU 30 inputs the output results of extraction (step 128), displaying them on the LCD 3h (step 130). When a plurality of results of extraction are present, one of the data of addressee identification information is selected with the numeric keys 3b
15 (step 132). Thereafter, upon detection of the ON state of the registration button 3g (YES at step 134), the CPU 30 registers the selected addressee identification information in the telephone directory of the EEPROM 33 (step 136).

In the above-described facsimile system 1, the data of
20 telephone directory stored in the PC 2 can be retrieved at the facsimile machine 3 side, which side is away more or less from the PC 2. Consequently, the user need not move from the location of the facsimile machine 3 to the location of the PC 2 every time of retrieval.

25 The transmission process the CPU 30 of the facsimile machine 3 executes at step 140 in FIG. 7A will be described with reference to FIG. 10. In the following description, the user of the facsimile machine 3 transmits an electronic mail accompanying

the data of image information to an addressee registered as No. 1 (see FIG. 6). The CPU 30 detects selection of the registration No. 1 addressee on the basis of operation of the abbreviated dialing button 3e (YES at step 142). The CPU 30 then judges
5 whether a mail address of the selected addressee is registered (step 144). Since the mail address of the selected addressee No. 1 has been registered (YES at step 144), the CPU 30 starts up a software for electronic mail transmission (step 146).

The CPU 30 then makes an electronic mail (step 152) when
10 detecting the ON state of the transmission button 3c (YES at step 148) and then the setting of an original on the basis of the output signal from the original sensor 40 (YES at step 150). The CPU 30 then starts the scan of the original by the image scanner 38 (step 154). Upon detection of completion of the scan (YES at
15 step 156), the CPU 30 dials to the SMTP 7 (step 158). Upon detection of connection to the SMTP 7 (YES at step 160), the CPU 30 transmits the electronic mail accompanying the image data obtained from the original by the scanning (step 162).

The electronic mail is transmitted from the SMTP 7 via the
20 internet A and the SMTP 8 to the POPS 12. The addressee accesses at the facsimile machine 10 to the POPS 12 so that the electronic mail stored in the POPS 12 is received by the facsimile machine 10 of the addressee.

When judging that the mail address of the selected addressee
25 is not registered (NO at step 144), the CPU 30 detects the ON state of the transmission button 3c (YES at step 164). Further, when detecting the setting of the original on the basis of the output signal of the original sensor 40 (YES at step 166), the

CPU 30 starts the scan of the original by the image scanner 38 (step 168). Upon detection of completion of the scan (YES at step 170), the CPU 30 dials to the telephone exchanger 6 (step 172). Upon detection of connection to the telephone exchanger 6 (YES at step 174), the CPU 30 transmits the image data obtained from the original by the scanning (step 176).

According to the above-described facsimile system 1, when the mail address of the selected addressee has been registered, a communication channel via the internet A is automatically selected so that the data of image information can be transmitted with the electronic mail. This can save a time for switching the communication channel depending upon presence or absence of a mail address of the selected addressee.

In the foregoing embodiment, the communication channel can manually be switched from that via the internet A to the public communication exchange network B which is not via the internet A when a facsimile number of the selected addressee has been registered. For example, the operation for selecting the public communication exchange network B may be executed before the transmission button 3c is turned on or subsequently to the operation for selecting an addressee.

In the foregoing embodiment, the data of telephone directory stored at the computer side is retrieved and extracted to thereby be registered at the facsimile machine side by the processes shown in FIG. 9B. The data of telephone directory registered at the facsimile machine side is designated and the data of image information is transmitted by the processes shown in FIG. 10. For example, however, the data of telephone directory extracted

at the computer side may temporarily be stored in a suitable memory area such as a RAM without being registered in the EEPROM 33, and the data of image information may be transmitted to an addressee indicated by the temporarily stored data. In this case, 5 data of one or more of the addressees is not stored at the facsimile side. When the user operates the facsimile machine so that the addressee is retrieved on the basis of a character string of the addressee, the data of telephone directory in the computer is retrieved, the corresponding data of telephone 10 directory is automatically taken into the facsimile machine to be stored in the temporal storage area. Further, the retrieved data of telephone directory is displayed on a display, for example. Confirming the displayed contents, the user depresses the transmission button when they are right, so that the data of image 15 information can be transmitted to a desired addressee. Thus, the user can transmit the data of image information to the addressee registered in the telephone directory at the computer side only by the operation at the facsimile machine side.

On the other hand, when part of the extracted data of 20 telephone directory cannot be displayed on the display of the facsimile machine upon retrieval of the telephone directory at the computer side, all the data of telephone directory may once be displayed on the display at the computer side. The user may select a desired data of telephone directory, which may be taken 25 into the facsimile machine side on the basis of the selection.

Step 224 executed by the CPU 25 of the PC 2 functions as computer-side referring means in the invention. Step 126 executed by the CPU 30 of the facsimile machine 3 functions as

instruction means. Step 226 executed by the CPU 25 functions
as computer-side output means. Step 128 executed by the CPU 30
functions as facsimile-side input means. Step 114 executed by
the CPU 30 functions as facsimile-side registering means. Step
5 116 executed by the CPU 30 functions as facsimile-side output
means. Step 206 executed by the CPU 25 functions as
computer-side input means. Step 130 executed by the CPU 30
functions as facsimile-side display means. Step 210 executed
by the CPU 25 functions as computer-side display means. Step
10 142 executed by the CPU 30 functions as selecting means. Step
162 executed by the CPU 30 functions as transmission means.

According to the above-described embodiment, when the
instruction means of the facsimile machine 3 gives the PC 2 an
instruction to refer to the addressee identification information,
15 the computer-side referring means of the PC 2 refers to the data
of addressee identification information stored in the storage
means (the HDD 28) and the data of addressee identification
information referred to by the computer-side referring means can
also be referred to by the facsimile machine 3. Accordingly,
20 part of the data of the addressee identification information that
cannot be stored at the facsimile machine 3 side can freely be
referred to by the instruction means at the facsimile machine
3 side when stored in the computer-side storage means of the PC
2. Consequently, a quantity of substantially storable data of
25 addressee identification information can be increased to a large
degree.

Particularly in the foregoing embodiment, the data of
addressee identification information stored in the computer-

side storage means (the HDD 28) can be taken into the facsimile-side storage means (the EEPROM 33). Accordingly, for example, when desired data of addressee identification information is stored in the computer-side storage means, the
5 information can be referred to and taken into the facsimile machine 3 side to thereby be stored. As a result, data of image information can readily be transmitted to a desired addressee on the basis of the stored information.

Further, the date of addressee identification information
10 registered at the facsimile machine 3 side can also be registered in the PC 2 side. Accordingly, since the same data of addressee identification information can be controlled both by the facsimile machine 3 and by the PC 2, the data of addressee identification information having a low frequency of use can be
15 reserved in the computer-side storage means even when deleted from the facsimile-side storage means. Consequently, the facsimile-side storage means can efficiently be used. Further, information which has been deleted once can readily be recovered in the facsimile-side storage means.

20 Further, the facsimile machine 3 side can give the PC 2 side an instruction to retrieve the data of addressee identification information. Further, the results of retrieval are displayed at the facsimile machine 3 side such that the contents thereof can be confirmed. This can save a time required for displaying
25 the results of retrieval on the display at the PC 2 side and thereafter re-inputting the data of addressee identification information at the facsimile machine 3 side. Further, the computer-side display means can display a larger quantity of data

of the results of extraction than the facsimile-side display means. Accordingly, when the results of extraction by the computer-side referring means has a quantity of information that cannot partially be displayed on the display means provided in
5 the facsimile machine 3, the destination of the information can be switched to the computer-side display means. For example, when a list of addressees having the same initials is displayed, the list can contain a larger number of addressees when displayed on the computer-side display means than when displayed on the
10 facsimile-side display means. Consequently, a target name of addressee can quickly be found.

Further, the facsimile machine 3 is provided with the selecting means which can select either the data of addressee identification information stored in the storage means at the
15 facsimile machine 3 side or that stored in the storage means at the PC 2 side. Further, the image information can be transmitted to the addressee indicated by the selected data of addressee identification information via or not via the internet. For example, even when desired data of addressee identification
20 information is stored in the computer-side storage means, the data can be referred to by an instruction at the facsimile machine 3 side. Further, when selected by the selecting means, necessary data of addressee identification information is automatically taken into the facsimile machine 3 side so that the data of image
25 information can be transmitted to a desired addressee on the basis of the data of address identification information. At this time, the user can perform all the operations necessary for the transmission only at the facsimile machine 3 side. Particularly

when the selected data of addressee identification information contains the mail address, the communication channel via the internet can automatically be selected for transmission of the data of image information. This can save a time required for
5 switching the communication channel depending on the contents of the selected data of addressee identification information.

Further, a mail address is generally composed of a plurality of characters and/or symbols. When such a mail address is registered with input keys (unsuitable for input of characters)
10 of a conventional facsimile machine and a small-sized liquid crystal display, the registration takes much time and accordingly reduces the working efficiency. In the foregoing embodiment, however, the character input work can be done with the keyboard and the large-sized display at the PC 2 side.
15 Consequently, the working efficiency can be improved to a large degree. Further, the data of addressee identification information input as described above can readily be referred to at the facsimile machine 3 side. Further, if the displayed data is a necessary one, it can readily be taken into the facsimile
20 machine 3 side by the operation thereat. This is effective for equipment provided with a function of transmitting data of image information via the internet.

In the above-described facsimile system, an application program for execution of internet facsimile (hereinafter,
25 "application") is carried out in the PC 2 so that address information of addressees is registered and a desired addressee is selected from the registered addresses, whereby the address can readily be ascertained without input of the characters of

the address one by one.

On the other hand, the PC 2 can also operate an application for execution of electronic mail. According to the application, address information of addressees is registered so that the
5 address of a desired addressee can readily be ascertained without input of the characters of the address one by one when the address is selected from the registered addressees. However, the address information registered on the electronic mail application cannot be used on the internet facsimile application
10 since these are independent applications.

A second embodiment of the invention is directed to a solution of the above-described problem. The second embodiment will now be described with reference to FIGS. 11 to 13. Referring to FIG. 11, the arrangement of an internet facsimile machine 310
15 in accordance with the invention is schematically shown. The internet facsimile machine 310 comprises an image processing section 320 and a PC 330. The image processing section 320 includes a scanner 321 for reading images, a printer 322 for printing the images, an information expansion/compression
20 section 323 for expanding received image information and compressing image information to be transmitted, an image memory 324 for storing image information compressed by the information expansion/compression section 323, and a PC interface section 325 rendering information exchange between the image processing
25 section 320 and the PC 330 possible. A general type of facsimile machine or the multifunction type facsimile machine as described in the foregoing embodiment may be used as the image processing section 320. The image processing section 320 is connected via

the PC interface section 325 to the PC 330 or, more specifically, to an I/O port 331 thereof.

The PC 330 comprises a CPU 332, a memory 333, a line control section 334, and a modem 335 for modulating and demodulating
5 signals. The memory 333 of the PC 330 stores an application for execution of electronic mail and an internet facsimile application for execution of internet facsimile transmission. The memory 333 comprises a ROM, a RAM or a hard disk.

The application for execution of electronic mail is well
10 known in the art. For example, an address of the addressee is stored in a predetermined area of the memory 333 of the PC 330 so as to correspond to the name of the addressee, whereby the address of the addressee is registered. Thereafter, when the user inputs the name of the addressee on the PC 330 using keys,
15 an electronic mail can automatically be transmitted to the addressee without input of the address.

In the internet facsimile application, data of image information read by the scanner 321 is compressed by the information expansion/compression section 323, and the
20 compressed data is stored in the image memory 324. The data of image information is converted so as to have a format transmittable on the internet. Further, the data of image information is transmitted via the internet to an address input on the PC 330. In the internet facsimile application,
25 furthermore, the data of image information received via the internet is converted to a format suitable for the subsequent processes and then stored in the image memory 324. The data is expanded by the information expansion/compression section 323

and then printed by the printer 322.

The memory 333 of the PC 330 is provided with an internet facsimile address registration area 333B for storing address information used in the internet facsimile application.

5 FIG. 12 schematically illustrates a communication network to which the internet facsimile machine 310 is connected. The machine 310 is connected to a LAN 350 and further via a public communication line 360 and an internet 370 to a facsimile machine 380 of an addressee.

10 The electronic mail application is installed in the PC 330 of the internet facsimile machine 310 and is already in operation. FIG. 13 shows processes for diverting address information having registered by the above-mentioned electronic mail application to a purpose of use in the internet facsimile application. First,
15 the electronic mail application is started up (step S10). Address information is already registered in the electronic mail application. The address information contains addresses of addressees, words identifying the respective addressees, for example, the respective names of the addressees. The internet
20 facsimile application is then started up (step S20). A process for copying address information by the internet facsimile application is then started (step S30). In this process, address information made by the electronic mail application and stored in the electronic mail address registration area 333A is
25 retrieved (step S40) and the data structure of the information is analyzed. Various types of electronic mail applications employ peculiar manners for storing the address information. The above-mentioned analysis of the data structure is carried

out in order that the storing manner of actually stored address information may be found.

The address information is then read on the basis of the results of analysis of the data structure (step S60). The read
5 address information is displayed on a display of the PC 330 (step S70). Thereafter, data of information such as the address, telephone number, etc. is added to the address information on display, if necessary (step S80). The data of information is stored in the internet facsimile address registration area 333B
10 according to a storing format by the internet facsimile application so that the data is rendered usable on the internet facsimile application (S90). The process is then completed.

The address information registered in the internet facsimile as described above is read out by the internet facsimile
15 application in the same manner as address information registered on the internet facsimile application.

The same addressee is common to the electronic mail address and the internet facsimile address in the embodiment. However, even when both addresses differ from each other, each address
20 can be registered as that for the internet facsimile depending on the aspect of the analysis. For example, when a plurality of addresses correspond to one addressee, the first address may be defined as the electronic mail address, whereas the second address may be defined as the internet facsimile address. As
25 a result, the address of the same addressee can be prevented from duplicate.

The address information having already registered on the basis of the electronic mail application can be diverted to the

purpose of use on the internet facsimile application as the result of execution of the above-described processes. Accordingly, the same address need not be registered individually on the electronic mail application and on the internet facsimile
5 application. Consequently, the user can save the time.

In a modified form of the second embodiment, display of the address information at step S70 in FIG. 13, addition of information at step S80, and start-up of the electronic mail application at step S10 may be eliminated. Further, both of the
10 electronic mail application and the internet facsimile application are installed in the same personal computer in the second embodiment. However, the applications may be installed in the different personal computers respectively so that the electronic mail application is used by communication between the
15 personal computers.

The internet facsimile machine 310 comprises the image processing section 320 (the facsimile machine) and the PC 330 (personal computer) in the second embodiment. However, for example, the internet facsimile machine may comprise a personal
20 computer to which a scanner, a printer, a modem, etc. are connected. Further, the programs including various applications and OS for operating the facsimile machine and the personal computer are stored in the ROM and HDD in the foregoing embodiments. However, these programs may be stored in a CD-
25 ROM or FD, instead.

The foregoing description and drawings are merely illustrative of the principles of the present invention and are not to be construed in a limiting sense. Various changes and

modifications will become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. All such changes and modifications are seen to fall within the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

092445-012199

WE CLAIM:

1. A facsimile system comprising:
a facsimile machine reading image data from an original;
5 a computer transmitting to and receiving from the facsimile machine data of addressee identification information indicative of at least a name of addressee and a facsimile number corresponding to the name of addressee;
computer-side storage means provided at a computer side for
10 storing the data of addressee identification information;
computer-side referring means provided at the computer side for referring to the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means; and
instruction means provided in the facsimile machine so as
15 to be instructed at a facsimile machine side to refer via the computer-side referring means to the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means.
- 20 2. A facsimile system according to claim 1, wherein the computer includes computer-side output means for outputting the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means, and the facsimile machine includes facsimile-side input means provided so that the data of addressee
25 identification information output by the computer-side output means is received in the facsimile machine and facsimile-side storage means for storing the data of addressee identification information supplied to the facsimile-side input means.

3. A facsimile system according to claim 1, wherein the facsimile machine includes facsimile-side registering means for registering the data of addressee identification information in the facsimile-side storage means and facsimile-side output means
5 for outputting the data of addressee identification information registered in the facsimile-side storage means by the facsimile-side registering means, the computer includes computer-side input means for receiving the data of addressee identification information output from the facsimile-side
10 storage means by the facsimile-side output means, and the computer-side storage means stores the data of addressee identification information received by the computer-side input means.

15 4. A computer system according to claim 2, wherein the facsimile machine includes facsimile-side registering means for registering the data of addressee identification information in the facsimile-side storage means and facsimile-side output means for outputting the data of addressee identification information
20 registered in the facsimile-side storage means by the facsimile-side registering means, the computer includes computer-side input means for receiving the data of addressee identification information output from the facsimile-side storage means by the facsimile-side output means, and the
25 computer-side storage means stores the data of addressee identification information received by the computer-side input means.

5. A facsimile system according to claim 3, wherein:

the facsimile machine includes retrieval instructing means for inputting information about the name of addressee contained in the data of addressee identification information and
5 instructing to retrieve the data of addressee identification information corresponding to the input information;

the computer-side referring means retrieves the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means based on instruction delivered by the
10 retrieval instructing means, thereby extracting the corresponding data of addressee identification information;

the computer-side output means outputs to the facsimile machine results of extraction by the computer-side referring means; and

15 the facsimile machine includes facsimile-side display means for displaying the results of extraction output by the computer-side output means to thereby be received by the facsimile-side input means.

20 6. A facsimile system according to claim 4, wherein:

the facsimile machine includes retrieval instructing means for inputting information about the name of addressee contained in the data of addressee identification information and instructing to retrieve the data of addressee identification
25 information corresponding to the input information;

the computer-side referring means retrieves the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means based on instruction delivered by the

retrieval instructing means, thereby extracting the corresponding data of addressee identification information;

the computer-side output means outputs to the facsimile machine results of extraction by the computer-side referring
5 means; and

the facsimile machine includes facsimile-side display means for displaying the results of extraction output by the computer-side output means to thereby be received by the facsimile-side input means.

10

7. A facsimile system according to claim 5, wherein the computer includes computer-side display means for displaying results of extraction an amount of which is larger than one of the results of extraction displayed by the facsimile-side
15 display means.

8. A facsimile system according to claim 2, wherein the facsimile machine includes selecting means for selecting the data of addressee identification information stored in the facsimile-side storage means and at least one of the data of
20 addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage means, said one of the data being the one referred to by the computer-side referring means, and transmission means for transmitting image data to an addressee indicated by the data
25 of addressee identification information selected by the selecting means either via a communication channel by way of an internet or via a public communication network not by way of the internet.

9. A facsimile system according to claim 8, wherein each of the facsimile-side storage means and the computer-side storage means is capable of storing data of a mail address specifying an addressee of an electronic mail as the data of addressee identification information, and the transmission means transmits image data to an addressee specified by the mail address via the communication channel by way of the internet when the data of addressee identification information is the mail address.

10

10. A facsimile system according to claim 1, wherein the facsimile machine is capable of executing facsimile transmission via an internet to an addressee, and the facsimile machine includes reading means for reading data of address information registered on the basis of an electronic mail application program which is already in operation and designating means for designating the data of address information read by the reading means as data of address information for the facsimile transmission via the internet.

20

11. A facsimile system according to claim 10, wherein the facsimile machine includes address information storage means for storing the data of address information designated by the designating means as an addressee address for the facsimile transmission via the internet and address selecting means for selecting a desired address from the address information storage means.

12. A facsimile system according to claim 10, wherein the electronic mail application program is in operation on the computer of the system or a computer other than the computer of the system.

5

13. A facsimile system according to claim 11, wherein the electronic mail application program is in operation on the computer of the system or a computer other than the computer of the system.

10

14. An internet facsimile machine comprising capable of executing facsimile transmission via an internet to an addressee, comprising:

15 reading means for reading data of address information registered on the basis of an electronic mail application program which is already in operation; and

designating means for designating the data of address information read by the reading means as data of address information for the facsimile transmission via the internet.

20

15. An internet facsimile machine according to claim 14, further comprising address information storage means for storing the data of address information designated by the designating means as an addressee address for the facsimile transmission via the internet and address selecting means for selecting a desired address from the address information storage means.

16. An internet facsimile machine according to claim 14,

wherein the electronic mail application program is in operation on the computer of the system or a computer other than the computer of the system.

- 5 17. An internet facsimile machine according to claim 15, wherein the electronic mail application program is in operation on the computer of the system or a computer other than the computer of the system.

- 10 18. A facsimile system comprising:
 a facsimile machine reading image data from an original;
 a computer transmitting to and receiving from the facsimile machine data of addressee identification information indicative of at least a name of addressee and a facsimile number
15 corresponding to the name of addressee;
 a computer-side storage circuit provided at a computer side for storing the data of addressee identification information;
 a computer-side referring circuit provided at the computer side for referring to the data of addressee identification
20 information stored in the computer-side storage circuit; and
 an instruction circuit provided in the facsimile machine so as to be instructed at a facsimile machine side to refer via the computer-side referring circuit to the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage
25 circuit.

19. An internet facsimile machine capable of executing facsimile transmission via an internet to an addressee,

comprising:

a reading circuit for reading data of address information registered on the basis of an electronic mail application program which is already in operation; and

- 5 a designating circuit for designating the data of address information read by the reading circuit as data of address information for the facsimile transmission via the internet.

20. A recording medium for recording a program for operating
10 a facsimile machine, the program realizing the functions of:
reading means for reading data of address information registered on the basis of an electronic mail application program which is already in operation; and
designating means for designating the data of address
15 information read by the reading means as data of address information for the facsimile transmission via the internet.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A facsimile system includes a facsimile machine reading image data from an original, a computer transmitting to and receiving from the facsimile machine data of addressee
5 identification information indicative of at least a name of addressee and a facsimile number corresponding to the name of addressee, a computer-side storage circuit provided at a computer side for storing the data of addressee identification information, a computer-side referring circuit provided at the
10 computer side for referring to the data of addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage circuit, and an instruction circuit provided in the facsimile machine so as to be instructed at a facsimile machine side to refer via the computer-side referring circuit to the data of
15 addressee identification information stored in the computer-side storage circuit.

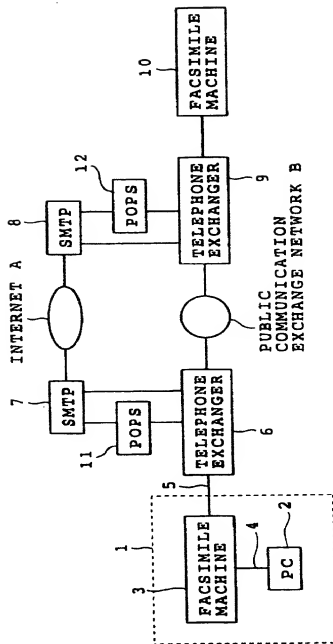


FIG. 1

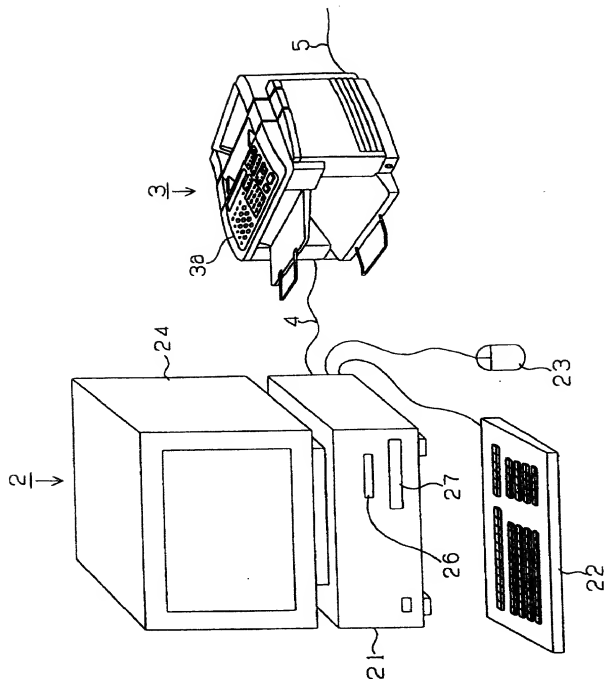


FIG. 2

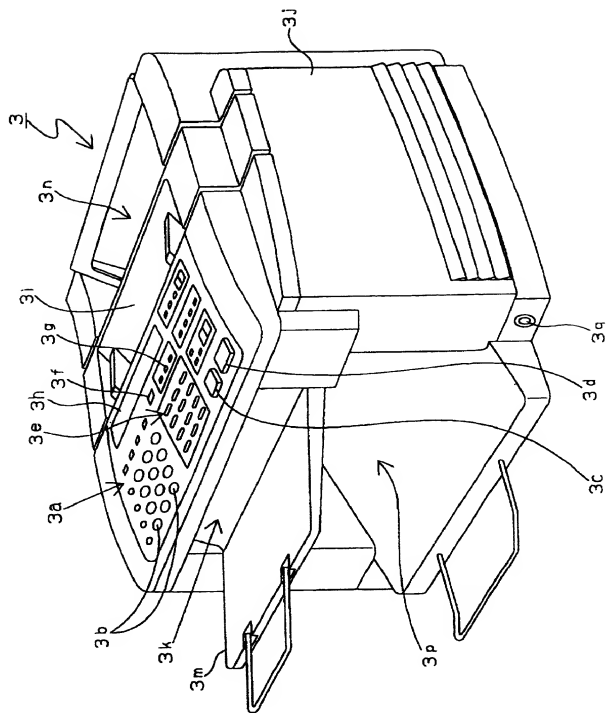


FIG. 3

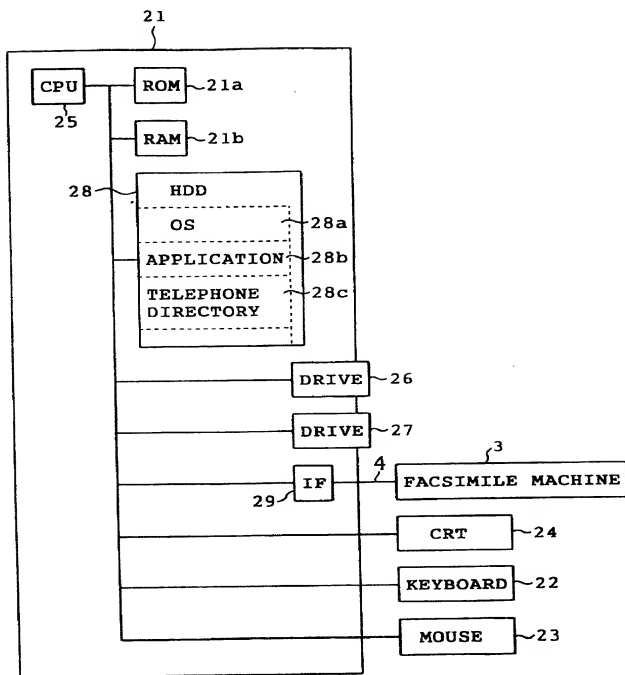


FIG. 4

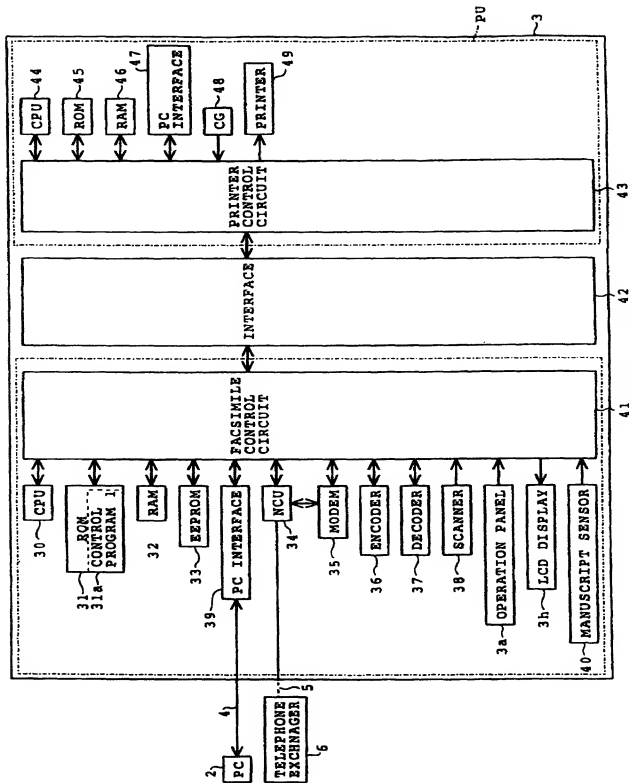


FIG. 5

	ADDRESSEE	FACSIMILE NUMBER	MAIL ADDRESS
No. 1	Mr. A	033-123-4567	abc.@def.or.jp
2	Mr. B	052-987-6543	123.@ghi.or.jp
:	:	:	:
100	Mr. C	012-345-6789	xyz.@abc.or.usa

FIG. 6

FACSIMILE MACHINE

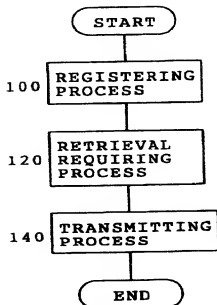


FIG. 7A

P C

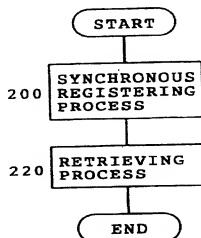


FIG. 7B

FACSIMILE MACHINE REGISTERING PROCESS

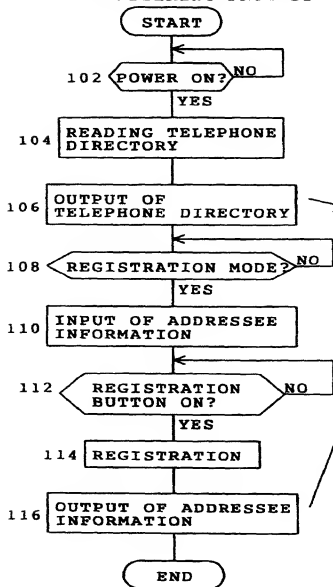


FIG. 8A

PC SYNCHRONOUS REGISTERING PROCESS

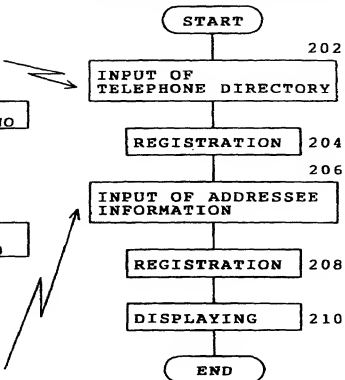


FIG. 8B

FACSIMILE MACHINE RETRIEVAL REQUIRING PROCESS

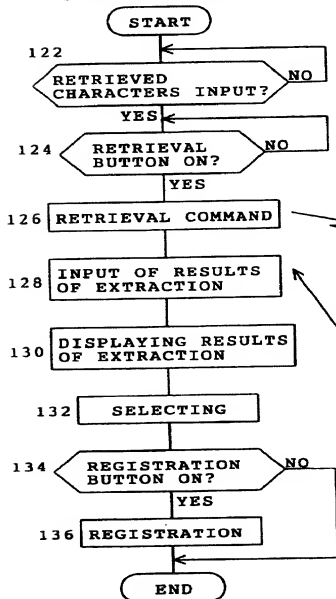


FIG. 9A

PC RETRIEVING PROCESS

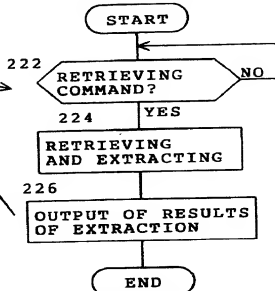


FIG. 9B

FACSIMILE MACHINE TRANSMITTING PROCESS

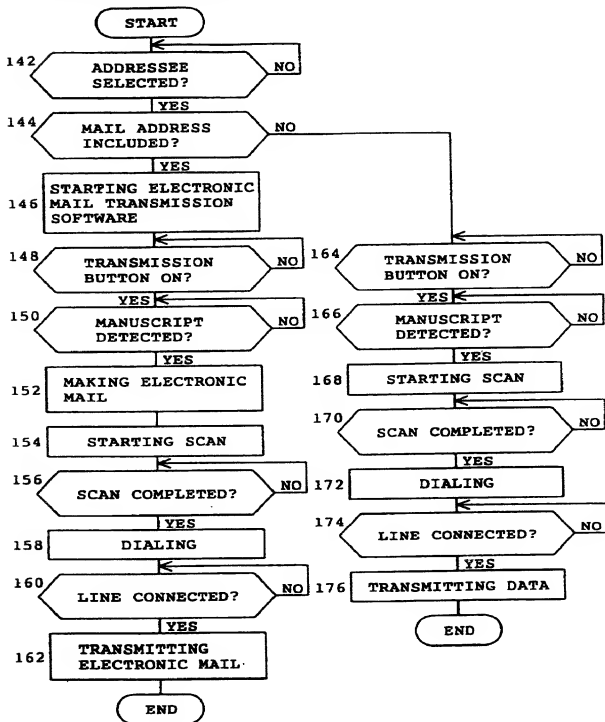


FIG. 10

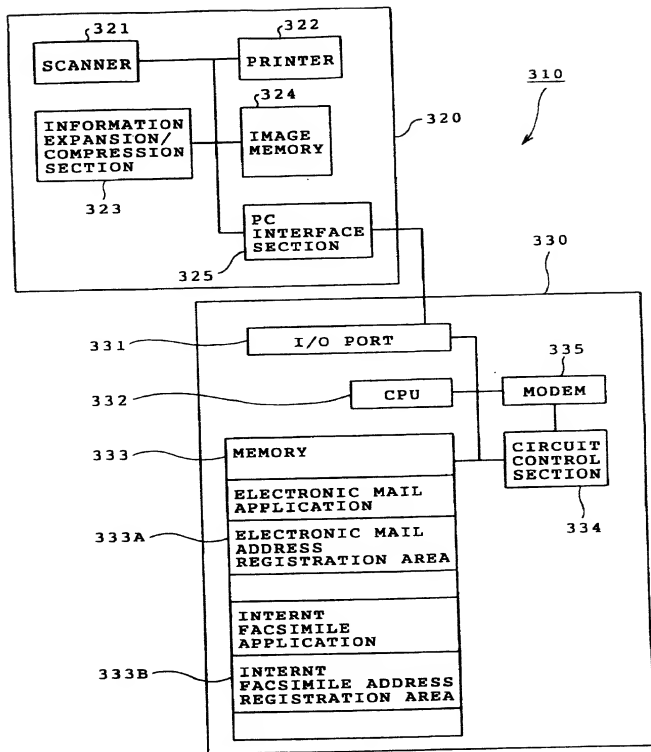


FIG. 11

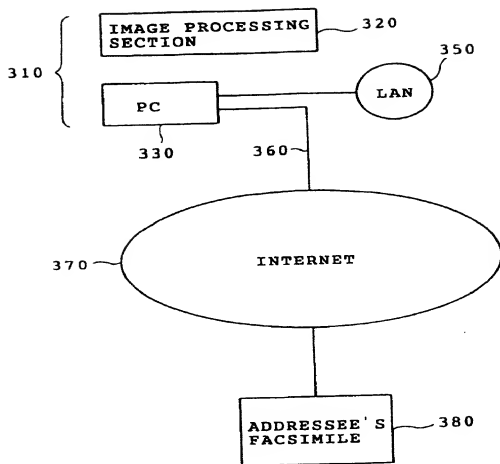


FIG. 12

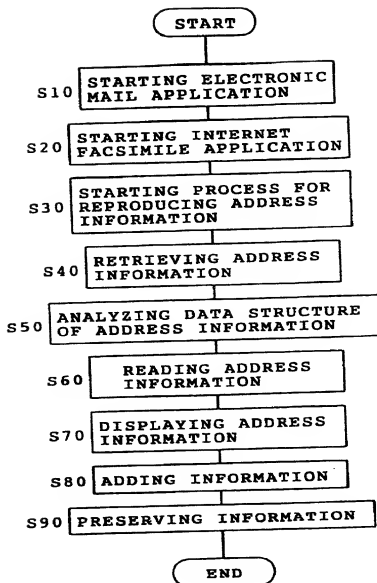


FIG. 13